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SOME OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS IN 4-H CLUB WORK

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A radio talk by Miss Mattie Puckett, Home Demonstration Agent, of Agriculture Spotsylvania County, Virginia, delivered in the National 4-H Club Radio Program, October 5, 1935, and broadcast by a network of 57 associate NRC radio stations.

It is a pleasure for me to bring to the radio audience some outstanding achievements in 4-H club work in our state. There are in Virginia at the present time 1200 community 4-H clubs with an enrollment of 30,000 boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 20. The 4-H club program not only teaches them better practices in agriculture and home economics through various projects in these fields but also aids them in developing into happier and more efficient citizens. In addition to the regular community clubs there are two other groups that are under the auspices of the 4-H organization, the Junior Farm and Homemakers Club and the 4-H All Star Chapter. The Junior Farm and Homemaker clubs have grown out of the need for more advanced and challenging programs for those in their latter teens and early twenties. These clubs make it possible for this older group to come together for serious thought and discussion of their problems as well as for wholesome recreation.

While the Virginia 4-H All Star Chapter was organized to give recognition to a limited number of outstanding members for excellency in all phases of the club program, it has developed into a service organization with a membership of over 600 young men and women representing every section of the state. The All Stars are making a definite contribution by serving as local leaders and in helping to promote club work in their counties.

One of the most attractive features of the 4-H program are the 4-H camps. The programs are largely recreational and inspirational. This group life develops a feeling of comradeship and does much to bring out the all important factor of cooperation. Here, too, the boys and girls develop leadership and the spirit of service and friendliness.

In addition to the regular project work 4-H clubs hold monthly meetings with programs centered around topics of special interest to boys and girls. Personality Development, social customs, citizenship, health, appreciation of nature, art, music, books are woven into the programs. Always there is much fun and good fellowship. The recreational activities of the club features games, dramatics, choruses, hobbies and community get-togethers. This recreational development through the 4-H club program is filling a real need in rural Virginia. Club members carry the recreation into their homes. Community recreation tends to unite the people more closely and to promote friendliness and good cheer. Wholesome homemade recreation with all members of the family taking part lends a happier atmosphere to the home life.

The development of worthwhile hobbies has been stressed in the club program this year and is bringing much satisfaction and happiness to those who are riding their hobbies.

A number of state and county contests are available to 4-H club folks. Competitive events mean a great deal to club members. It is not merely the fact that there is something to win in a contest but the training involved is extremely

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valuable whether the contestant wins or loses. The past year Virginia club members made 4,949 exhibits and won \$8,000.00 in cash prizes.

In many of the colleges in Virginia the former 4-H club members attending have organized themselves into College 4-H Clubs or Alumni 4-H Clubs. These clubs are most active in aiding former 4-H club members entering college. In addition to their work with new students they hold regular meetings with good programs dealing with problems of rural youth and leadership development.

Another interesting feature emphasized this year in some counties was a study of the humble wild green. Yes, we actually go grazing down in Virginia, and in Carrol county the club members have identified over 40 edible wild greens, and know where they are found, what time of year to look for them and how to cook them. This project of glorifying the wild green has been a real factor in fighting pellagra, which is a problem in some counties. The home demonstration agent has pushed this in cooperation with the doctors as a practical and possible remedy for pellagra as well as an excellent health practice. This month club members will make exhibits of their collections of wild greens at their achievement day.

The outstanding achievement of the year is the honor brought to Virginia 4-H club members by Augusta county which was declared winner in the Southern States in the National 4-H Club Progress Contest. This brought a cash prize which is now being used as a nucleus in developing a recreational center for the county. This honor has done much to stimulate interest in 4-H club work in the state.

Club training is giving to its members a deeper appreciation of home life and a feeling of responsibility to the community. It creates a respect for work and a desire for self improvement. Four-H club work has made some outstanding achievements in Virginia but its greatest achievement is helping to develop girls and boys into worthwhile citizens.